Chapter 06
Safety

A.   Policy

1.   Firefighter and public safety is our first priority. All Fire
Management Plans and activities must reflect this commitment. The
commitment to and accountability for safety is a joint responsibility
of all firefighters, managers, and administrators. Individuals must be
responsible for their own performance and accountability.

2.   Safety comes first on every fire, every time.

3.   The Standard Firefighting Orders are firm. We don't break them, we
don't bend them. All firefighters have the right to a safe assignment.
(Federal Wildland Fire Management Policy, January, 2001)

4.   Every supervisor, employee, and volunteer is responsible for
following safe work practices and procedures, as well as identifying
and reporting unsafe conditions.

5.   All firefighters, fireline supervisors, fire managers, and agency
administrators have the responsibility to ensure compliance with
established safe firefighting practices.

6.   Attention to safety factors is critical to the individual employee
incident position evaluation process. These evaluations must be
honest appraisals of performances. The documentation of sub-
standard or unsafe performances is mandatory.

7.   *Agency Specific Safety Policy Guides:*
   a.   ***BLM*** *– BLM Handbook 1112-1, 1112-2*
   b.   ***FWS*** *– Service Manual 241 FW7, Firefighting*
   c.   ***NPS*** *– DO-50 and RM-50 Loss Control Management Guideline*
   d.   ***USFS*** *– FSH-6709.11 Health and Safety Code Handbook*

B.   Goal

1.   The goal of the fire safety program is to provide direction and
guidance for safe and effective management in all activities. Safety is
the responsibility of everyone assigned to wildland and prescribed
fire, and must be practiced at all operational levels, from the National
Fire Director, state/regional director, and unit manger—to employees
in the field. Agency administrators need to stress that firefighter and
public safety always takes precedence over property and resource

loss. Coordination between the fire management staff and unit safety officer(s) is essential in achieving this objective.

    2. For additional safety guidance and reference refer to:
       a. *Fireline Handbook (PMS 410-1, NFES 0065).*
       b. *Incident Response Pocket Guide (PMS 461, NFES 1077).*
       c. *Wildland Firefighter Health & Safety Report, (MTDC Publication).*
       d. *National Interagency Mobilization Guide (NFES 2092).*

C. Risk Management Process

    1. The risk management process identified in the NWCG Incident Response Pocket Guide (*IRPG*) helps ensure that critical factors and risks associated with fireline operations are considered during decision making. This process must be applied to all fire operations prior to taking action.

    2. The Risk Management Process checklist can be found on page 06-15.

D. Job Hazard Analysis (JHA)

    1. A completed job hazard analysis is required for:
       a. Jobs or work practices that have potential hazards.
       b. New or non-routine or hazardous tasks to be performed where potential hazards exist.
       c. Jobs that may require the employee to use non-standard personal protective equipment (PPE).
       d. Changes in equipment, work environment, conditions, policies, or materials.
    2. Supervisors and appropriate line managers must ensure that established JHAs are reviewed and signed prior to any non-routine task or at the beginning of the fire season. Additional JHA information can also be obtained at www.fs.fed.us/r1/people/jha/jha_index_www.html.

E. Work/Rest Guidelines

Refer to the current NWCG Work/Rest Guidelines.

F. Length of Commitment

Refer to the current NWCG Length of Assignment Guidelines.

    1. Management Directed Days Off
    Refer to the current NWCG Length of Assignment Guidelines.

G.   Driving Standard

All employees driving motor vehicles are responsible for the proper care, operation, maintenance and protection of the vehicle. The use of government-owned, rented, or leased motor vehicles is for official business only. Unauthorized use is prohibited.

1.   General Driving Policy
   a.   Employees must have a valid state driver's license in their possession for the appropriate vehicle class before operating the vehicle. Operating a government-owned or rental vehicle without a valid state driver's license could result in disciplinary action.
   b.   All drivers whose job duties require the use of a motor vehicle will receive initial defensive driver training within three months of entering on duty and refresher driver training every three years thereafter.
   c.   The operator and all passengers are required to wear seat belts and obey all federal and state laws.
   d.   All traffic violations or parking tickets will be the operator's responsibility.
   e.   All driving requiring CDL will be performed in accordance with applicable Department of Transportation regulations.

2.   Non-incident Operations Driving

Refer to the current Driving Standards for each individual agency.

3.   Incident Operations Driving

This policy addresses driving by personnel actively engaged in wildland fire suppression or all-risk activities; including driving while assigned to a specific incident (check-in to check-out) or during initial attack fire response (includes time required to control the fire and travel to a rest location). Individual agency driving policies shall be consulted for all other driving.
   a.   Agency resources assigned to an incident or engaged in initial attack fire response will adhere to the current agency work/rest policy for determining length of duty day.
   b.   No driver will drive more than 10 hours (behind the wheel) within any duty-day.
   c.   Multiple drivers in a single vehicle may drive up to the duty-day limitation provided no driver exceeds the individual driving (behind the wheel) time limitation of 10 hours.
   d.   A driver shall drive only if they have had at least 8 consecutive hours off duty before beginning a shift.
      1)   Exception: Exception to the minimum off-duty hour requirement is allowed when essential to:

(a) accomplish immediate and critical suppression objectives.
(b) address immediate and critical firefighter or public safety issues.

e.   As stated in the current agency work/rest policy, documentation of mitigation measures used to reduce fatigue is required for drivers who exceed 16 hour work shifts. This is required regardless of whether the driver was still compliant with the 10 hour individual (behind the wheel) driving time limitations.

4.   *FWS/NPS – Program funds are authorized to pay for the cost of CDL licensing fees and exams, necessary for employees to operate fire equipment, with one exception. That exception involves those cases where a test has been failed and must be retaken, in which case the employee will be responsible for costs associated with additional testing.*

5.   **Fire Vehicle Operation Standards**
Engines, Water Tenders, Crew Carrying Vehicles, and vehicles towing trailers will not exceed 65 miles per hours or the posted speed-- whichever is more restrictive. Operators of all other vehicle types must abide by state traffic regulations.

Headlights and taillights will be illuminated at all times while the vehicle is in motion. Emergency lighting will not be used except when performing suppression or prescribed fire operations, or to mitigate serious safety hazards. Overhead lighting and other emergency lighting must meet state code requirements, and will be illuminated whenever the visibility is reduced to less than 300 feet. Blue lights are not acceptable for wildland fire operations.

H.   Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

1.   All personnel assigned on wildfires and prescribed fires are required to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) appropriate for their duties and/or as identified in JHAs. Employees must be trained to use safety equipment effectively.
a.   Required PPE includes:
1)   8-inch high, lace-type work boots with non-slip (Vibram type), melt-resistant soles and heels.
2)   fire shelter
3)   hard hat with chinstrap
4)   goggles/safety glasses
5)   ear plugs/hearing protection
6)   aramid shirts

         7)   aramid trousers

         8)   leather gloves

    b.   Wear additional PPE as identified by local conditions, material safety data sheet (MSDS), or JHA.

2.   Permanent-press materials are not to be worn, as they melt and stick to the skin when exposed to flame or heat. Because most synthetic fibers melt when exposed to flame or extreme radiant heat, personnel should wear only undergarments made of 100 percent cotton or wool, aramid, or other fire resistant materials.

    Aramid clothing will be cleaned or replaced whenever soiled, particularly with oils. Aramid clothing will be replaced when the fabric is so worn as to reduce the fire resistance capability of the garment or is so faded as to significantly reduce the desired visibility qualities. Any modification to personal protective equipment that reduces the fire retardant ability such as iron-on logos is an unacceptable practice and will not be allowed on fires. Due to the strength of aramid weave, stagging is generally ineffective. It also makes the pants unsuitable for trade-in for clean pants or for return to the cache system.

3.   *NPS/USFS - No personal protective equipment will be purchased that does not meet or exceed USDA Forest Service or National Fire Protection Association Standards.*

4.   **Head Protection**

    a.   Personnel must be equipped with hard hats and wear them at all times while on the fireline. Hard hats must be equipped with a chinstrap, which must be fastened while riding in, or in the vicinity of, helicopters.

    b.   Acceptable helmets for fireline use are "helmet, safety, plastic" (NFES 0109, 8415-01-055-2265/GSA) listed in NWCG *National Fire Equipment System Catalog: Fire Supplies and Equipment*, or equivalent helmet meeting 1977 NFPA standard requirements and ANSI Z89.1-1986. Hard hats consist of two components-- the shell and the suspension-- which work together as a system. Both components require periodic inspection and maintenance. Specific inspection and maintenance instructions are found in an MTDC Tech Tip publication (0267-2331-MTDC).

5.   **Eye and Face Protection**

    a.   The following positions require the wearing of eye protection: nozzle operator, chainsaw operator/faller, helibase and ramp

personnel, and retardant mixing crews. Other duties may require eye protection as identified in a specific JHA.

b. Face shields providing full face protection must be worn when working in any position where face protection has been identified as required in the job specific JHA: Terra-Torch®, power sharpener operators, etc.

6. Hearing Protection

Personnel who are exposed to a noise level in excess of 85db must be provided with, and wear, hearing protection. This includes, but is not limited to, chainsaw operators/fallers, pump operators, helibase and aircraft ramp personnel, retardant mixing personnel, and any other personnel exposed on a regular basis to damaging noise levels. Other duties may require hearing protection as identified in a specific JHA.

Employees with a time weighted average exposure of 85 db or higher are required to be placed under a hearing conservation program as required by *29 CFR 1910.95*—consult with local safety & heath personnel for specifics.

7. Neck Protection

Aramid fiber "shrouds" are not required PPE. If used, the shrouds must meet the design and performance requirements identified in the *NFPA 1977 Standard on Protective Clothing and Equipment for Wildland Fire Fighting, 1998 ed*. If issued, shrouds should be used only in impending flash fuel or high radiant heat situations and not routinely worn throughout the operational period, due to increases in physiological heat stress.

8. Leg Protection

All chainsaw chaps will meet specification USFS 6170-4F. All chainsaw operators must wear chainsaw chaps maintained as per the manufacturer's specifications.

9. Foot Protection

Personnel assigned to fires must wear all leather, lace-type work boots with non-slip (Vibram type), melt-resistant soles and heels. The leather top must be at least 8 inches in height, measured from the top of the heel (Alaska exempt). The boots are a condition of employment for firefighting positions and are purchased by the employee prior to employment.

10. *NPS – Government funds will be utilized for purchase of wildland fire boots for those employees currently red carded/certified in positions which require wildland and prescribed fireline duties. The individual employee must be available to perform those duties when*

*assigned; if not routinely available for park fire assignments,
FIREPRO funds should not be used to purchase boots for that
employee.*

 a. **NPS** *– FIREPRO funds, not to exceed $100 a pair, may be used
to purchase or repair boots. Other government funds, such as
from safety, protection or maintenance accounts, may also be
used for purchase or to augment FIREPRO funds, dependent on
local management direction. Costs to repair boots not damaged
on fire should be charged to other appropriate accounts.*

 b. **NPS** *– It is the responsibility of the local FMO to determine
those employees requiring boots as personal protective
equipment, and the frequency of necessary replacement or
repair. Boots will be considered similar to uniform items and
will not be subject to cache item return, due to health,
sanitation, and individual sizing considerations.*

11. Respiratory Protection

Any use of respiratory protection (e.g., dust masks, half-mask
respirators, self-contained breathing apparatus-SCBA, etc.) must be
in compliance with agency safety and health regulations and OSHA's
Respiratory Protection Standard (29 CFR 1910.134).

12. **BLM** *– Only employees trained and qualified to use SCBAs and
permanently assigned to states with an approved SCBA Program are
authorized to use SCBAs. When these employees are operating
outside their state, the host State Director must authorize the use of
SCBAs. (BLM 1112-2)*

13. **USFS – FSM- 5135.3 – Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus.**
*Wildland firefighters may use only an open-circuit, self-contained
breathing apparatus (SCBA) of the positive pressure type when smoke
from vehicle, dump, structure, or other non-wildland fuel fire cannot
be avoided while meeting wildland fire suppression objectives (29
CFR 1910.134, Respiratory Protection). If such an apparatus is not
available, avoid exposure to smoke from these sources.
The acquisition, training, proper use, employee health surveillance
programs, inspection, storage, and maintenance of an SCBA must
comply with the National Fire Protection Association Standard,
NFPA-1981 and 29 CFR 1910.134I, and be justified by a Job Hazard
Analysis. Where an SCBA is approved, it may be carried only on a
fire engine and its use must be consistent with FSM 5130.2 and FSM
5130.3.*

14. Fire Shelters
Fire shelters will be issued and carried in a readily accessible manner by all line personnel. Fire shelters will be inspected regularly, to ensure they meet agency and manufacturer standards. "Training Shelters" will be deployed at required annual fireline safety refresher training. No "live fire" exercises for the purpose of fire shelter deployment training will be conducted. The deployment of shelters is to be viewed as a last resort, and will not be used as a tactical tool. Supervisors and firefighters must never rely on fire shelters instead of using well-defined escape routes and safety zones. When deployed on a fire, fire shelters will be left in place and not be removed pending approval of authorized investigators.

I.   Fireline Safety

1.   Incident Briefings
Fire managers must ensure that safety briefings are occurring throughout the fire organization, and that safety factors are addressed through the IC and communicated to all incident personnel at operational briefings. The identification and location of escape routes and safety zones must be stressed. A briefing checklist can be found on page 06-16 and in the *Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG).*

2.   LCES—A System for Operational Safety
  L – Lookout(s)
  C – Communication(s)
  E – Escape Route(s)
  S – Safety Zone(s)

LCES will be used in all operational briefings and tactical operations as per the *Incident Response Pocket Guide (IRPG).*

3.   Incident Safety Oversight
  a.   Agency administrators must be actively involved in the management of wildfires, and personally visit an appropriate number of escaped fires each year. PPE is required for certain scenarios. Fire and aviation management staff can provide the appropriate PPE and guidance (See Page 06-10).
  b.   *NPS/USFS – Agency Administrator, Fire Program Managers, and/or Safety and Health Program Managers shall conduct supplemental inspections on a minimum of 10% of their unit's Type 3, 4, and 5 fires and document their inspections in the incident records.*
  c.   At least one person, operationally qualified at a level commensurate to the complexity of the incident, should be

assigned the responsibility for safety oversight. Additional safety oversight may be requested when:
1) A fire escapes initial attack or when extended attack is probable.
2) There is complex or critical fire behavior.
3) There is a complex air operation.
4) The fire is in an urban intermix/interface.

d. Every individual has the right to turn down unsafe assignments; they also have the responsibility to identify alternative methods of accomplishing the mission. The "How to Properly Refuse Risk" appendix is found on page 06-17.

4.   Unit/Area Closures
Threats to public safety may require temporary closure of a unit/area, or a portion of it. When a fire threatens escape from the unit/area, adjacent authorities must be given as much advance notice as possible in order to achieve orderly evacuation.

5.   Thunderstorm Safety
Approaching thunderstorms may be noted by a sudden reverse in wind direction, a noticeable rise in wind speed, and a sharp drop in temperature. Rain, hail, and lightning occur only in the mature stage of a thunderstorm. See *IRPG* for specific protocols.

6.   Standard Safety Flagging
The NWCG recommends the following Safety Zone/Escape Route flagging for wildland fire (prescribed and suppression) activities:
a. Hot-pink flagging marked "Escape Route" (NFES 0566). Crews with colorblind members may wish to carry and utilize lime-green flagging in addition to the hot-pink flagging.
b. Hazards. Yellow with black diagonal stripes, fluorescent, biodegradable, 1 inch wide (NFES 0267).
c. If the above recommendation is not utilized on an incident, the incident will need to identify the selected color and make known to all firefighters.

7.   Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)
a. Millions of acres in the United States contain unexploded ordnance (UXO), most a result of weapons system testing and troop training activities conducted by the Department of Defense. This property includes active military, formerly used defense (FUDS), and base realignment and closure (BRAC) sites. The risks posed by property containing UXO could be great depending on the types and amount of UXO present and how the property is or may be used. Refer to the *IRPG* for specific operational information.

b.   ***BLM-*** *Specific Bureau policy for UXO does not exist at this time. General guidance is as follows: If UXO is suspected, do not enter the area. Small arms (rifle and shotgun) munitions areas should be flagged and avoided by fire personnel. For suspected larger munitions, the area must be avoided by fire personnel and contact local law enforcement bomb squad or nearest Department of Defense agency. Each state will determine which employee is authorized to enter known or potential hazardous substance release sites, and the responsibility for these determinations remains with each State Director. The general rule of UXO is," if you did not drop it, do not pick it up, kick it or hit it with equipment".*

8.   Hazardous Materials

Employees that discover any unauthorized waste dump or spill site that contains indicators of potential hazardous substances (e.g, containers of unknown substances, pools of unidentifiable liquids, piles of unknown solid materials, unusual odors, or any materials out of place or not associated with an authorized activity) should take the following precautions:

a.   Treat each site as if it contains harmful materials.

b.   Do not handle, move, or open any containers, breathe vapors, or make contact with any material.

c.   Move a safe distance upwind from the site.

d.   Contact the appropriate personnel as outlined in your agency policy.

e.   ***BLM-*** *BLM requires that all field personnel complete a First Responder Awareness training. All BLM personnel are required to take an annual refresher for Hazardous Material protocol.*

f.   The following general safety rules shall be observed when working with chemicals:

1)   Read and understand the Material Safety Data Sheets.

2)   Keep the work area clean and orderly.

3)   Use the necessary safety equipment.

4)   Label every container with the identity of its contents and appropriate hazard warnings.

5)   Store incompatible chemicals in separate areas.

6)   Substitute less toxic materials whenever possible.

7)   Limit the volume of volatile or flammable material to the minimum needed for short operation periods.

8)   Provide means of containing the material if equipment or containers should break or spill their contents.

9. **Heat Stress**

   There are three forms of heat stress. The mildest is heat cramps.
   Heat stress can progress to heat exhaustion and eventually heat
   stroke. Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Delayed treatment can
   result in brain damage and even death. At the first sign of heat stress,
   stop work, get into the shade, and begin drinking fluid. *See Chapter
   05 of Fitness and Work Capacity, 2nd ed. (1997).*

10. **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide**

    For information of this subject call USDA Forest Service,
    Technology and Development Program, Publications, (406) 329-
    3978, and ask for *Health Hazards of Smoke, Recommendations of the
    Consensus Conference, April 1997 (item Number 97512836).* Copies
    are available free of charge in limited numbers.

11. **"Six Minutes for Safety" Training**

    It is recommended that daily "Six Minutes for Safety" training be
    conducted that focuses on high-risk, low frequency activities that fire
    personnel may encounter during a fire season.

    A daily national "Six Minutes for Safety" briefing can be found at
    www.nifc.gov and in the National Situation Report.

12. **Snag Safety**

    Snags present a significant hazard to wildland firefighters. Snags
    typically have much lower fuel moistures than live, green trees; and
    they burn more readily. In the process, they often throw spot fires far
    in advance of the main fire and often burn through more quickly than
    green trees falling with little or no warning. A critical part of hazard
    tree assessment is to identify and mitigate hazards to an acceptable
    level prior to operations. See *IRPG* for specific protocols.

J. **Safety for Non-Operational Personnel Visiting Fires**

A wide variety of personnel such as agency administrators, other agency
personnel, dignitaries, members of the news media, etc. may visit
incidents. The following standards apply to all visitors.

1. **Visits to an Incident Base**

   The minimum recommendation for PPE at an incident base is the
   same as all field locations.
   a. Lace-up shoes with non-slip soles and heels
   b. Long trousers
   c. Long-sleeve shirt

For agency personnel, the field uniform is excellent; however for more flexibility the aramid fire shirts and trousers or flight suit may be worn.

BLM - *Refer to BLM Handbook 1112-2, 3.3 BLM requires 6" shoes.*

2.   **Visits to the Fireline**
   a.   Visits to the fireline must have the approval of the IC.
   b.   Visitors must maintain communications with the DIVS or appropriate fireline supervisor of the area they are visiting.
   c.   Required PPE:
      1)   8-inch high, lace-type work boots with non-slip (Vibram type), melt-resistant soles and heels
      2)   aramid shirts
      3)   aramid trousers
      4)   hard hat with chinstrap
      5)   leather gloves
      6)   fire shelter
      7)   hand tool
      8)   water canteen
   d.   Visitors to the Fireline may be "Escorted" or "Non-Escorted" depending on the following requirements:
      1)   Non-Escorted:
         a)   Visitors must have a physical fitness level of "light."
         b)   Must have adequate communications and radio training.
         c)   Annual Fire Safety Refresher Training.
         d)   Completed the following training:
            (1)   Introduction to Fire Behavior (S-190)
            (2)   Firefighter Training (S-130)
            (3)   Standards for Survival (S-132)
   a.   Other non-escorted support personnel:
      1)   Incident personnel involved in vehicle operations on established roadways and working in areas which pose no fire behavior threat.
         a)   Annual Fire Safety Refresher Training.
      2)   Escorted personnel:
         a)   All non-incident, non-agency, visitors lacking the above training and physical requirements must be escorted while on the fireline.
         b)   Visitors must receive training in the proper use of PPE.
         c)   Visitors must be able to walk in mountainous terrain and be in good physical condition with no known limiting conditions.

        d)   Escorts must be minimally qualified at the Single Resource Boss. Any deviation from this requirement must be approved by the IC.

3.   Helicopter Observation Flights
Visitors who take helicopter flights to observe fires must receive a passenger briefing and wear the following required PPE:
a.   Required PPE:
    1)   Flight helmet
    2)   Leather boots
    3)   Fire-resistant clothing
    4)   All leather or leather and aramid gloves
b.   Training Requirements
For agency personnel, training requirements can be met by any of the following courses:
    1)   A-101 Aviation Safety
    2)   S-270 Basic Air Operations
    3)   S-271 Interagency Helicopter Training
Occasional passengers/visitors have no training requirement, but a qualified flight manager must supervise loading and unloading of passengers.

4.   Fixed-Wing Observation Flights
a.   Required PPE
No PPE is required for visitors and agency personnel who take fixed-wing flights to observe fires. However, a passenger briefing is required, and the flight level must not drop below 500 feet AGL.
b.   Training Requirements
For agency personnel, training requirements can be met by any of the following courses:
    1)   A-101 Aviation Safety
    2)   S-270 Basic Air Operations

K.   SAFENET

SAFENET is a form, process, and method for reporting and resolving safety concerns encountered in wildland fire, prescribed fire, or all risk operations. The information provided on the form will provide important, safety-related data to the National Interagency Fire Center, and determine long-term trends and problem areas.

1.   The objectives of the form and process are:
a.   To provide immediate reporting and correction of unsafe situations or close calls in wildland fire.

      b.   To provide a means of sharing safety information throughout the fire community.

      c.   To provide long-term data that will assist in identifying trends.

      d.   Primarily intended for wildland and prescribed fire situations, however, SAFENET can be used for training and all-risk events.

Individuals who observe or who are involved in an unsafe situation shall initiate corrective actions, if possible, and then report the occurrence using SAFENET. You are encouraged, but not required, to put your name on the report.

Prompt replies to the originator (if name provided), timely action to correct the problem, and discussion of filed SAFENETs at local level meetings encourage program participation and active reporting.

SAFENET is not the only way to correct a safety-related concern or it does not replace accident reporting or any other valid agency reporting method. It is an efficient way to report a safety concern. It is also a way for front line firefighters to be involved in the daily job of being safe and keeping others safe, by documenting and helping to resolve safety issues. SAFENETs may be filed:

      a.   electronically at www.nifc.gov, (click on the safety link and follow directions to SAFENET)

      b.   postage paid mail-in form (PMS 405-2, NFES 2633)

      c.   by phone-in at 1-888-670-3938.

See the SAFENET form on page 06-18.

L.   Accident/Injury Reporting

  1.   The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandates that all accidents and injuries be reported in a timely manner. This is important for the following reasons:

      a.   To protect and compensate employees for incidents that occur on-the-job.

      b.   To assist supervisors and safety managers in taking corrective actions and establish safer work procedures.

      c.   To determine if administrative controls or personal protective equipment are needed to prevent a future incident of the same or similar type.

      d.   To provide a means for trend analysis.

  2.   DOI Employees are required to immediately report to their supervisor every job-related accident or incident. Managers and supervisors shall ensure that an appropriate level of investigation is conducted for each incident and record all personal injuries and property damage to

the DOI Safety Management Information System (SMIS) at www.smis.doi.gov within six days. Reporting is the responsibility of the injured employee's home unit regardless of where the accident or injury occurred.

3.   Coordinate with your human resources office or administrative personnel to complete appropriate Officer of Worker's Compensation (OWCP) forms.

4.   *USFS – The Forest Service direction for accident/injury reporting is found in FSM 6700 and FSH 6709.11.*

M. Critical Incident Management

The National Wildfire Coordinating Group has published the *Agency Administrator's Guide to Critical Incident Management (PMS 926, NFES 1356).* The guide is a series of subject-area checklists designed to be reviewed in detail before a critical incident occurs, during the actual management of the incident, and after the incident has taken place. It is a compilation of lessons learned and suggestions that are designed to assist an agency administrator in the management of a critical incident. The guide is not intended to replace local emergency plans or other specific guidance that may be available, but should be used in conjunction with existing SOPs. It is available through the Publications Management System, National Interagency Fire Center.

Risk Management Process

Step 1 Situation Awareness
Gather Information
   ☐ Objective(s) ☐ Previous Fire Behavior
   ☐ Communication ☐ Weather Forecast
   ☐ Who's in Charge ☐ Local Factors

 Scout the Fire

Step 2 Hazard Assessment
Estimate Potential Fire Behavior Hazards
   ☐ Look up/Down/Around Indicators

Identify Tactical Hazards
   ☐ Watch Outs

 What other safety hazards exist?

 Consider severity vs. probability?

Step 3 Hazard Control
Fire Orders → LCES Checklist – MANDATORY
   ☐ Anchor Point
   ☐ Downhill Checklist (if applicable)

What other controls are necessary?

Step 4 Decision Point
Are controls in place for identified hazards?
  NO – Reassess situation YES – Next question

Are selected tactics based on expected fire behavior?
  NO – Reassess situation YES – Next question

Have instructions been given and understood?
  NO – Reassess situation YES – Initiate action

Step 5 Evaluate
Personnel: Low experience level with local factors?
     Distracted from primary tasks?
     Fatigue or stress reaction?
     Hazardous attitude?

 The Situation: What is changing?
      Are strategy and tactics working?

Briefing Checklist

Situation
- ☐ Fire name, location, map orientation, other incidents in area
- ☐ Terrain influences
- ☐ Fuel type and condition
- ☐ Fire weather (<u>previous, current, and expected</u>)
  - Winds, RH, temperature, etc.
- ☐ Fire behavior (<u>previous, current, and expected</u>)
  - Time of day, alignment of slope and wind, etc.

Mission/Execution
- ☐ Command
  - Incident commander/immediate supervisor
- ☐ Commander's intent
  - Overall strategy/objectives
- ☐ Specific tactical assignments
- ☐ Contingency plans

Communications
- ☐ Communication plan
  - Tactical, command, air-to-ground frequencies
  - Cell phone numbers
- ☐ Medivac plan

Service/Support
- ☐ Other resources
  - Working adjacent and those available to order
  - Aviation operations
- ☐ Logistics
  - Transportation
  - Supplies and equipment

Risk Management
- ☐ Identify known hazards and risks
- ☐ Identify control measures to eliminate hazards/reduce risk
  - Anchor point and LCES
- ☐ Identify trigger points for disengagement/re-evaluation of operational plan

Questions or Concerns?

How to Properly Refuse Risk

Every individual has the right and obligation to report safety problems and contribute ideas regarding their safety. Supervisors are expected to give these concerns and ideas serious consideration. When an individual feels an assignment is unsafe they also have the obligation to identify, to the degree possible, safe alternatives for completing that assignment. Turning down an assignment is one possible outcome of management risk.

A "turn down" is a situation where an individual has determined they cannot undertake an assignment as given and they are unable to negotiate an alternative solution. The turn down of an assignment must be based on an assessment of risks and the ability of the individual or organization to control those risks. Individuals may turn down as unsafe when:

- There is a violation of safe work practices.
- Environmental conditions make the work unsafe.
- They lack the necessary qualification or experience.
- Defective equipment is being used.

Individual will directly inform their supervisor that they are turning down the assignment as given. The most appropriate means to document the turn down is using the criteria (10 Fire Orders, 18 Watch out Situations, Principles of LCES, etc.) outlined in the Risk Management Process.

Supervisor will notify the Safety Officer immediately upon being informed of the turn down. If there is no Safety Officer, notification shall go to the appropriate section chief or to the Incident Commander. This provides accountability for decisions and initiates communication of safety concerns with in the incident organization.

If the supervisor asks another resource to perform the assignment, they are responsible to inform the new resource that the assignment has been turned down and the reasons it has been turned down.

If an unresolved safety hazard exists or an unsafe act was committed, the individual should also document the turn down by submitting a Safenet (ground hazard) or safecom (aviation hazard) form in a timely manner.

These actions do not stop an operation from being carried out. This protocol is integral to the effective management of risk as it provides timely identification of hazards to the chain of command, raises risk awareness for both leaders and subordinates, and promotes accountability.

S A F E N E T
Wildland Fire Safety and Health Network

SAFENET

REPORTED BY

Name (optional)_____   Phone

Agency/Organization_____   Date Reported

EVENT

Date and Time_____ Jurisdiction/Local Unit

Incident Name & Number_____ State

Incident Type	Incident Activity	Stage of Incident
9 Wildland	9 Line	9 Initial Attack
9 Prescribed	9 Support	9 Extended Attack
9 Wildland Fire Use	9 Transport to/from	9 Transition
9 All Risk	9 Readiness/Preparedness	9 Mop Up
9 Training		9 Demobe
9 Fuel Treatment		9 Non-Incident
9 Work Capacity Test		9 Other

Position Title

Task

Management Level

Resources Involved

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

9 Fire Behavior   9 Environmental   9 Communications
9 Human Factors   9 Equipment   9 Other (Explain Below)

Other:

NARRATIVE

Describe in detail what happened including the concern or potential issue, the environment (weather, terrain, fire behavior, etc), and the resulting safety/health issue. If more room is required, write on a separate piece of paper and include it with this form

SN
SAFENET

BUSINESS REPLAY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL   PERMIT NO. 253   BOISE, ID

SAFENET
PO BOX 16645
BOISE ID 83715-9750

....
Fold on dotted line

S A F E N E T

Wildland Fire Safety and Health Network

SN
SAFENET

The purpose of SAFENET is:
1.   To provide reporting and documentation of unsafe situations or close calls.
2.   To provide a means of sharing safety information throughout the fire community.
3.   To provide long-term data that will result in identifying trends.
Submitting a SAFENET is not a substitute for on the spot corrections!

When filing a SAFENET:

You have the option of submitting SAFENET at any level of the organization, but are encouraged to submit it to your supervisor for immediate corrective action.
If you submit SAFENET directly to the national center, you are encouraged to provide a copy to your supervisor.
You have the right to report unsafe conditions anonymously, in accordance with 29 CFR 1960.

File a SAFENET by Phone
1-888-670-3938

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Please document how you tried to resolve the problem and list anything that, if changed, would prevent this safety issue in the future.

PMS 405-2 (3/00)   **NFES 2633**

06-20   **Release Date: January 2004**